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SUBJECT: PROVINCIAL RECONSTRUCTION TEAM STAFFING ASSESSMENT

¶1. (U) In December 2007, the Office of Provincial Affairs (OPA) requested Team Leaders from the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) and the Embedded Provincial Reconstruction Teams (ePRTs) to conduct a bottom-up staffing assessment to determine what, if any, additional positions and skill sets they needed to effectively address their teams' and OPA's goals and objectives. The deadline for this assessment was February 15th. Upon review of these submissions, OPA determined that the team leaders' initial requests required additional justification and analysis. Consequently, we directed team leaders to revisit their assessments, prioritize their immediate skill set/position requests, indicate if life support/billeting could be absorbed within the teams' resources, and provide justifications for these new positions. This reassessment yielded a total request for 65 new positions for our PRTs/ePRTs. Given OPA's current authorized PRT personnel ceiling of 469, these positions, if approved, would require an adjustment of the PRT staffing limits to 534.

¶2. (U) Two key assumptions underlie this request: that the current PRT footprint of 25 PRTs/ePRTs and 6 PSTs, would remain essentially the same through 2009; and that MNC-I would provide appropriate life support and military security to support PRT operations through that period.

¶3. (U) Skill sets/ numbers requested:

Governance - 14

To develop partnerships and effective working relationships between and among provincial/local government entities and officials; coordinate capacity development in multiyear planning, budget preparation and execution; develop QRF projects to reinforce local governance. (Included in this request is a Governance advisor for Women's initiatives to continue with a particular focus on women's issues in one of our ePRTs, which is targeting programming towards women representatives on newly established district councils.

IPAOs (Iraq Provincial Action Officers) - 11

To provide political and economic reporting on provincial atmospherics, improvements in progress towards five key strategic objectives (Governance; political development; rule of law; reconciliation; economic development).

Agricultural Specialists - 7

To perform baseline assessments of provincial agricultural sectors; to coordinate with and advise local farmers, cooperatives, and government agricultural officials on agricultural projects and investments; use QRF and other program tools to assist in the reestablishment of local agriculture infrastructure.

Business Development - 7

To conduct baseline business assessments and work with the private sector and local government to foster business development, especially in sectors with potential to generate significant employment opportunities; to advise chambers of commerce and business associations on methods to improve, expand or redirect their activities to the benefit of their members, again with a focus on opportunities likely to lead to employment growth.

Engineers - 5

To assist in training, coaching, and mentoring Iraqi engineer/reconstruction counterparts on all aspects of project and reconstruction development and management ; work with the Provincial Reconstruction Development Councils to support competent engineering assessments, scopes of work, quality assurance and control, and project management, with a focus on projects supported by QRF.

Industrial specialist - 4

To advise and assist provincial governments in assessing, developing, monitoring, and evaluating capabilities of local oil and gas utilities and to suggest strategies and appropriate technologies to improve production and distribution to the provinces; to advise provincial governments on plans, programs, priorities, and policies related to power generation and electrical grid planning

Public Health - 3

To work with relevant Iraqi organizations in the design and execution of rural health care programs, hospitals, clinics, and emergency medicine

Public Diplomacy officer - 3

To inform and advocate with local audiences for PRT/BCT programs in support of Mission Strategic Plan objectives and highlight efforts to promote reconciliation/anti-extremism, improved local education, and to provide support to provincial and district authorities in the effective use of media.

Rule of Law - 3

To serve as DOS and DOJ representatives responsible for rule of law initiatives at provincial level; increase citizen access to both the judicial system and legal representation; to serve as advisor to local law enforcement and corrections' agencies and other rule of law institutions.

Budget specialist - 2

To advise Provincial Council members and Provincial Accounting Directors General on developing budget policies that promote transparency, improve budget formulation and budget execution.

Public Utility specialists/Water, Waste Mgt., Public Works - 4

To provide expert assessment, advice and enhance the professional support to municipal service-providers, while managing active reconstruction efforts on local water systems.; to support public works initiatives at the provincial level; plans with and supports local Iraqi counterparts charged with managing public works projects including sanitary sewer, water, gas, electric, telecommunications, and other public utilities as well as roads, bridges, rails and public property planning issues. Knowledge of environmental impact assessments required.

Veterinarians - 2

To build institutional capacity to improve animal health and food safety practices and serve as general agricultural advisor to local and provincial officials.

Management officer - 1

To manage and coordinate PRT logistical operations, QRF administration, etc. (Note: given the administrative burdens placed upon teams, frequent requests for information on various aspects of PRT operations, and regular comments by team leaders, we would have expected a greater expressed need for administrative support positions on the PRTs. We are exploring additional options to fill this need. End Note.)

¶4. (U) Deputy Team Leaders (DTL): On the PRTs, the essential positions of Deputy Team Leaders are provided by MNC-I command. However, on the ePRTs, team leaders have the opportunity to appoint their deputies. Most have chosen from civil affairs officers assigned to their teams. Others have designated the USAID rep as deputy. A recent report produced by the Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL) notes that generally the DTL slots have been filled by volunteers from within the Individual Ready Reserve System. Some have/have not had the requisite civil affairs or interagency experience valuable to leadership on the PRTs. OPA has been advised that the Civil Affairs Psychological Operations Command (CAPOC) might be a source of additional, experienced Civil Affairs Officers with the skills necessary for the important position of DTL.

¶5. (U) OPA notes that three requests have been made for Public

Health specialists. Several months ago we hosted a senior delegation of U.S. health officials (Navy Surgeon General, DoD AS for Health, Director/CDC). All expressed interest in PRT activities in public health. Additionally, the Embassy has recently welcomed a Deputy Health Attaché, who has expressed the interest of his office in greater interaction with the PRTs. MNF-I has also stated its interest in securing greater information on the Iraqi health sector.

This high level interest should be taken as a possible indicator of increased public health activity at the PRT level.

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